



U.S. Immigration  
and Customs  
Enforcement

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# News Release

## **ADMITTED IRANIAN HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATOR DEPORTED**

*Court maintains he kept ties to Iran government while illegally in the U.S.*

WASHINGTON, D.C.—U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detention and removal officers deported a citizen of Iran Wednesday who admitted to persecuting others while employed by the government of Iran.

Reza Ghol Emamipour was escorted from Dulles International Airport to Europe and ultimately placed on a flight to Iran.

"ICE is committed to tracking down human rights violators and seeing them deported, particularly where the violators maintain ties to the very government that sponsored his abusive actions," said Michael J. Garcia, the Department of Homeland Security Assistant Secretary for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

Emamipour illegally entered the United States Nov. 1, 1986, near San Ysidro, Calif. He applied for relief from deportation Jan. 12, 1998, and after his claim was denied he was placed into immigration court proceedings.

During his interview and the subsequent immigration hearing, Emamipour claimed he had severed all ties with the Iranian government.

ICE presented irrefutable evidence in court that showed that Emamipour maintained ties to the Iranian government after he illegally entered the United States, including the fact that the government of Iran issued him an official passport Sept. 18, 1991 and extended the validity of this passport through Sept. 18, 1997. Emamipour worked for the Iranian government as a private security guard to Iranian Foreign Minister Kamal Kharazi during Kharazi's visit to Los Angeles in September 2000.

Emamipour testified during the immigration hearing that he arrested “at least 500 people” who were believed to pose a threat to the Islamic government for political and religious reasons. Other evidence presented at the hearing established that he was aware that these people would be executed or severely punished for their status as members of the former regime. Emamipour further admitted to shooting 15 to 20 people and killing one person while trying to arrest them.

On Feb. 13, 2001, an immigration judge in Los Angeles ordered Emamipour deported. The judge found that Emamipour was a persecutor, ineligible to remain in the United States, and barred from voluntary departure. The judge also held that Emamipour maintained strong ties with the Iranian government. Emamipour has remained in ICE custody since Aug. 1, 2001. An immigration judge denied bond concluding that he was a flight risk, a threat to the community, and a national security concern. During this time, ICE --with the assistance of the Department of State-- worked on his removal from the United States.

The Emamipour case is just one of more than 200 active investigations of human rights violators in the United States by ICE agents. At the same time, ICE attorneys are currently tracking and litigating more than 900 cases nationwide involving human rights violators from more than 60 countries.

Emamipour’s removal is the latest under ICE’s ongoing initiative to identify, apprehend, prosecute and remove human rights violators. To enhance these efforts, ICE created in the summer of 2003 the Human Rights Violators and Public Safety Unit and its legal counterpart, the Human Rights Law Division.

The Human Rights Violators and Public Safety Unit investigates individuals alleged to have committed torture, extrajudicial killings, persecution, and genocide. The Human Rights Law Division is responsible for providing legal advice to agents and litigation assistance to ICE field attorneys in potential persecutor and human rights abuser cases.

# ICE #

*U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.*